agencies provide "soft loan" for reducing the burden on the country's overall balance of payments, and insist on normal rates being charged to the ultimate borrower or project authorities. In addition, the Government of India as the borrower, bears the foreign exchange risk involved in repayment in entirety. All other charges, including commitment and service charges, are also absorbed by the Government of India. Both these factors entail an additional cost of borrowing which is not passed on to the States.

(c) The details of amount of loans given to the Government of Bihar by the Central Government and the rate of interest payable thereon are furnished in Annexure. (*See* Appendix CXLV, Annexure No. 2)

Bank Robberies

136. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA :
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of bank robberies in the country during the last three years, year-wise and Statewise and so far during the current year;

(b) what is the amount of money involved in each of these robberies;

(c) what is the amount recovered in each case;

(d) what was the number of persons arrested in each case; and

(e) what steps Government have taken to curb frequent bank robberies in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) to (d) Information in respect of the total number of bank robberies/dacoities which took place in various States/Union Territories in the country during the years 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988 (upto 10-2-88), amount involved therein, amount recovered and number of persons arrested in connection with these robberies/dacoities is given in the Annexure. (*See* Appendix CXLV annexure No. 3)

(e) A High Power Working Group, which was set up in August 1982 under the Chairmanship of the then Finance Secretary had reviewed security arrangements in banks and made suggestions for improvements therein. The Report of the Working Group was sent to all the public sector banks in August 1983 for implementing the recommendations. The Banks have been implementing these recommendations in a phased manner. Since the incidence of bank robberies/dacoities depends, to a considerable extent on the general security environment prevailing in the area, with changes in the security situation in a region, security arrangements in banks have to be reviewed and strengthened to meet the requirements of the situation. Security arrangements in banks have accordingly been reviewed from time to time and improvements made in the security arrangements of branches keeping in view the risk factor involved.

Setting up of housing promotion and Finance Corporation by SBI

137. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Bank of India has recently set up a Housing Promotion and Finance Corporation to provide long-term finance to middle and lower income groups for housing on ownership basis; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) and (b) The State Bank of India (SBI) has promoted a housing finance institution with the primary objective to provide long term finance at reasonable rate of interest to lower and middle income house holders for purchase, construction or renovation of houses,